

Maine Charter School Commission

September, 2015

On May 28, 2015, an announced on-site visit was made to Cornville Regional Charter School. The Maine Charter School Commission (MCSC) review team of 3 members was accompanied by the MCSC Executive Director, MCSC Director of Program Management, and Department of Education Special Education representative. The visiting team held interviews with school leadership, staff, students, parents, and the school's Governing Board. They also reviewed data provided by the school. Documents provided by the school are available from the MCSC office. Information gathered from documents, interviews, and on-site observation was used to determine the extent to which the school has met its contracted performance targets.

Commission Member, Review Team Chair	Mike Wilhelm
Commission	Jana Lapoint
Commission	Shelley Reed
MCSC Executive Director	Bob Kautz
MCSC Director of Program Management	Gina Post
DOE Special Education Representative	Peg Armstrong

The Maine State Charter School Commission will provide thoughtful stewardship in authorizing and monitoring public charter schools consistent with State statutes to create unique, high-quality learning options for Maine students.

Maine Charter School Commission

ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT

September 2015

Section 1: School Overview

School Name	Cornville Regional Charter School (CRCS)
Address	1192 West Ridge Road Cornville, Maine 04976

Executive Director	Justin Belanger
Board Chair	Jean Walker

Principal	Travis Works
Special Education Coordinator	Barbara Averill

Year Opened	2012-2013 school year
Years in Operation	3
Number of Sending Districts	6
Grades Served	K-8
Number of Students	103
Number of Students on Waiting List	18
Average Class Size	15
Teacher – Student Ratio	1:15

Mission	To create a safe, respectful, nurturing and active learning community where every child is given the opportunity to thrive academically, to be accepted, to celebrate accomplishments and to develop a lifetime love of learning.
Vision	To create a school where learning is built around each student so that they become engaged learners with relevant and challenging work.

Section 2: Indicator Summary Table

Indicator	Meets Contract agreement	Partially meets Contract agreement	Does not meet Contract agreement
Student Academic Proficiency		X ¹	
Student Academic Growth		X ²	
Achievement Gaps in proficiency and growth between major student subgroups ³			
Student Attendance	X		
Recurrent Enrollment from Year to Year	X		
Financial Performance and Sustainability	X		
Governance Board Performance and Stewardship	X		
Adequacy of Facilities Maintenance in Support of Program	X		
Food Service	X		
Transportation	X		
School Social and Academic Climate		X ⁴	
Parent and Community Engagement	X		

¹CRCS students scored equal to or higher than the state average in 4 grade level subject area Smarter Balanced tests.

²Student Academic Growth: 69.6% of students when including those who were within 1% of their Individual Growth Target

³ Smarter Balanced testing to establish a baseline in this area.

⁴ Student Social and Academic Climate: Student Survey not conducted

Section 3: Academics

CRCS partially met its targets in the area of Academics, with many students being within 1% of meeting their growth targets on NWEA, and

Targets:

Student Academic Proficiency: State Assessments

- Percent of grade 3-8 students scoring proficient on the ELA portion of the Maine State Assessment will meet or exceed the state average.
- Percent of grade 3-8 students scoring proficient on the math portion of the Maine State Assessment will meet or exceed the state average.

Student Academic Proficiency: School Selected Assessments

- 70% of students will meet their individual growth target on school-selected standardized test in reading. (NWEA)
- 60% of students will meet their individual growth target on school-selected standardized test in math. (NWEA)
- Pilot Year on Empower on school-designed assessment program measuring Common Core (PLP)
- 65% of students will meet or exceed proficiency on NWEA in reading
- Year 3 target: 50% of students will meet or exceed proficiency on NWEA in math
- 80% of students will make a minimum of 1 level of growth on their DRA

Student Academic Growth: State Assessments

- Establish baseline: Same cohort growth on State Assessment in ELA
- Establish baseline: Same cohort growth on State Assessment in math
- Establish baseline: Successive cohort growth on State Assessment in ELA
- Establish baseline: Successive cohort growth on State Assessment in math

Achievement Gaps

- Establish Baseline: Gaps in proficiency and growth between major student subgroups on Maine State Assessment.
- At the end of year three, the school and Commission will establish targets for the remainder of the contract: Gaps in proficiency and growth between major student subgroups on NWEA.
- Pilot Empower: Gaps in proficiency and growth between major student subgroups meeting Individual Growth Targets on their PLPs.

Performance:

On the NEWA Reading Assessment 64.6% of students met their individual growth targets, and 69.6% of students met their individual growth target or were within 1 point of meeting their target. The target of 70% was missed by 5.4%. In the school year 2013-2014, 63% of CRCS students met their growth targets for reading. Therefore, there was a 1% increase with the addition of 13 children testing in the spring of 2014. In the school year 2013-2014, 60% of students met or exceeded proficiency in reading by the spring. Therefore, CRCS students lost about 0.5%.

On the NWEA Math Assessment 63.6% of students met their individual growth targets, and 71.7% of students met their individual growth target or were within 1 point of meeting their target. In the school year 2013-2014, 44% of CRCS students met their growth targets for math. Therefore, they increased by 19% with the addition of 13 children testing in the spring. Statistically, they increased the number of students meeting their growth target by 43.1% over last year. They met the overall projected target of 60%. 47.4% of students met or exceeded proficiency on NWEA in math. In the school year 2013-2014, 44% of students met or exceeded proficiency in math by the spring, reflecting an increase of about 3%.

CRCS had 100% of students meet their goals that were established in the fall using Empower. On the DRA 90.6% of students made a minimum of 1 level of growth, which exceeds the goal by about 10%.

CRCS students in grades 3-8 participated in the state Smarter Balanced testing. In four areas CRCS students met or exceeded the state average. In 6 areas CRCS scores were below the state average. Scores varied greatly, particularly in the area of math, with 8th grade students exceeding the state average for level 3 or above by 31%, and grade 7 math being 36% below the state average for level 3 or above.

ELA	% level 3 or above - CRCS	% level 3 or above - Maine
Grade 3	50%	48%
Grade 4	41%	47%
Grade 5	50%	52%
Grade 6	20%	46%
Grade 7	33%	48%
Grade 8	50%	48%

Math	% level 3 or above –CRCS	% level 3 or above - Maine
Grade 3	46%	46%
Grade 4	17%	40%
Grade 5	8%	34%
Grade 6	0%	34%
Grade 7	0%	36%
Grade 8	63%	32%

Section 4: Enrollment and Attendance

In the area of Enrollment and Attendance CRCS met all of its targets as outlined in the school's Performance Indicators.

Targets:

Student Enrollment

- 90% of students enrolled on state "count day" who are still enrolled on the last day of school
- 90% of the student body who are eligible for re-enrollment at the end of one year will indicate their intent to return the following school year
- 75% of students enrolled continuously for multiple years

Student Attendance

- The Average attendance rate will be at or above 94%.

Performance:

On the last day of school 92.5 % of the 107 students enrolled on October 1 were still enrolled on the last day of school, meeting the target attendance of 90%. Reasons for student withdrawal included: relocation, transportation difficulties, change in family situation, employee resignation resulting in student withdrawal, and student social needs as a result of a very small peer group.

On the last day of school 98.9% of the 103 students enrolled indicated their intent to re-enroll, meeting the 90% re-enrollment target.

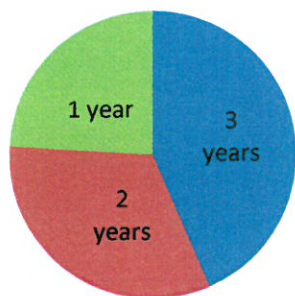
75% of students currently enrolled have been enrolled for 2 or more years, meeting the 75% continuous enrollment target.

On the last day of school:

43.4% of students had been enrolled for 3 years.

32.3% of students had been enrolled for 2 years.

24.2% of students had been enrolled for 1 year.



Disaggregation		Rate
Gender		
	Male	92%
	Female	95%
Race/Ethnicity		
	African American Black	99%
	Native Hawaiian-Pacific Islander	97%
	Caucasian-White	94%
	Two or More Races	87%
Economically Disadvantaged		93%
Special Education		94%
2014-2015 ATTENDANCE RATE		94%
2013-2014 Attendance Rate		94%

Section 5: Governance

In the area of Governance CRCS met its targets for performance and stewardship.

Targets:

Governance Board Performance & Stewardship

- Public accountability
- Transparent Board Operations
- Responsive Board Operations
- Legally compliant Board operations

2014-2015 Schoolyear Governing Board

Chair of the Board	Jean Walker
Vice Chair of the Board	Stephanie Miller
Board Secretary	Carrie Tessier
Board Member	Mimosa Mack
Board Member	Laurie Hayden
Board Member	Lisa Kimball
Board Member	Jessica Daigenault

Performance:

During the 2014-2015 school year the CRCS Governing Board hired a school Principal to serve as part of the Administrative team. This allowed the Executive Director to focus on many Superintendent-like tasks, rather than the day-to-day leadership and curriculum. This has, according to the CRCS teacher group, resulted in a very positive and focused administration.

Another accomplishment of the CRCS Board was, as suggested last year by the Maine Charter School Commission, attending a board training presented by Maine Association of Charter Schools.

Challenges faced by the Board included turnover of Board members, finding Board members with skill sets to replace outgoing board members, and a conflict between Board members. It is worth noting that the conflict issue resulted in stronger communication among the Board members.

Meeting agendas and minutes are posted on the school's website at: www.cornvilleregionalcharterschool.org. Parents attend Board Meetings, with 1-5 parents attending most meetings. One meeting during the 2014-2015 school year had 20 parents in attendance.

Section 6: Administration

Executive Director	Justin Belanger
Principal	Travis Works
Special Education Director	Barbara Averill

The CRCS Administration celebrated much success during the 2014-2015 school year.

Most of these accomplishments stem from the strong working relationship between the Executive Director and the Principal. The Principal began using the Marzano Teacher Evaluation Model and will continue to move forward in its implementation.

The Executive Director and the Principal recommended new positions at the school, including a Positive Behavioral Intervention Supports Coach /Ed. Tech position and an "Americorps – like" position, which the Board approved.

The principal has a strong rapport with the teachers and has professional development planned around subjects including Mass Customized Learning, Positive Behavioral Intervention Supports, Responsive Classroom.

The Executive Director and the Principal have hired a team of teachers at CRCS who are all currently certified teachers.

As part of the Agricultural Education program a greenhouse and tractor have been purchased which will expand and add value to the Agricultural Education Program.

Some of the areas of frustration for the administration were in the area of communication. One instance was regarding a conflict within the Governing Board. Another communication difficulty has been the dissemination of information from the Administration to families, particularly around the use of technology. As noted in Section 5 above, this conflict resulted in stronger communication among Board members, Administration, and families.

Section 7: School Climate

CRCS partially met its targets for School Climate. While surveys were conducted of parents and staff, there was not a student survey. The bullying/harassment incidents increased along with increased enrollment.

Targets:**School Social and Academic Climate**

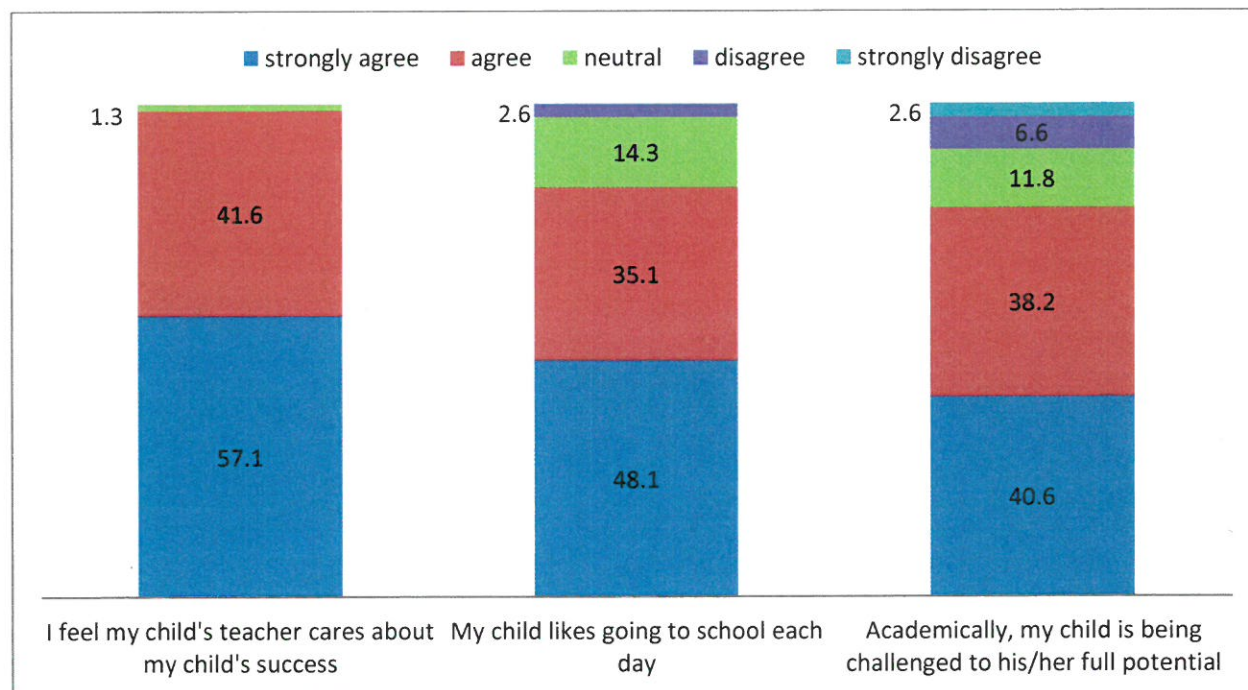
- Confidential survey of parents, staff, and students: 80% of surveys given out at PLP meetings will be returned and 50% of other anonymous surveys given out at other times will be returned.
- Fewer instances of bullying, harassment, or other abusive practices

Performance:

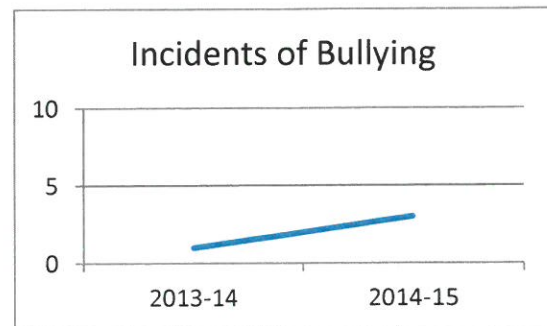
Teachers report being excited about the direction of the school and its positive administration. They appreciated being able to work with the Executive Director and the principal to develop the school schedule so that students can work together in dynamic groups in a multitude of areas both academic and social. Teachers found that the establishment of common programs, such as Zones of Regulation, throughout the school was positive.

A Student survey was not completed during the 2014-15 school year due to time constraints. For the coming school year, CRCS has a contract with a provider to have more effective surveys with parents, teachers, and students.

On a recent Parent Survey, 99% of participating students' parents reported feeling that the teacher cares about their child's success. 83% of participating students' parents reported that their child likes to go to school each day. 79% of participating students' parents reported feeling that they felt their child was being challenged academically.



During the 2014-15 school year there were 3 reported incidents of bullying/harassment. To address these issues there was an alternate lunch/recess plan put in place. Eventually there was a suspension and home tutoring. During the 2013-14 school there was one reported incident of bullying/harassment. CRCS added a grade level and 17 students. Growths in student population, along with attention to reporting, were possible contributors to an increase in bullying incidents. CRCS Administration will continue to implement Responsive Classroom and Positive Behavior Interventions in the coming year to address behavior.



Section 8: Parent and Community Engagement

In the area of Parents and Community engagement CRCS has met its targets.

Targets:

Parent and Community Engagement

- 100% of students will participate in student interest groups.
- 100% of parents will be sent a weekly newsletter from the office. A hardcopy will be provided upon request if access to email is unavailable.
- 80% of returned parent surveys will indicate satisfaction with level of parent communication.
- 100% of parents will be invited and a minimum of 70% of parents will participate in 1 or more activities throughout the year.
- 100% participation from students and 90% (to increase by 2% each year) participation from parents in PLP meetings and goal setting on PLPs.

Performance:

During the 2014-15 school year 100% of students were involved in student interest groups each round. Last year 18 student interest groups were offered over 3 days. This year 22-27 student interest groups were offered over a 2 day period.

All parents are subscribed to the CRCS electronic weekly newsletter. 10% of families have requested a hard copy, which is provided to them.

Parents attend Board meetings and report feeling welcome to visit or volunteer at CRCS.

Community Partnerships include: Maine Huts and Trails, USDA Cooperative Extension, MeANS, and Atlantic Salmon Federation.

Parents attend CRCS Board Meetings, with typically 1-5 parents in attendance at each meeting. One meeting during the 2014-2015 school year had 20 parents in attendance.

Section 9: Finances

CRCS met its targets in the area of Finances.

Targets:

Financial Performance and Sustainability

- School will produce monthly financial reports and evidence reviewed by governing board monthly through agenda item. When monthly financials vary by more than 5%, the variance will be flagged for special governing board consideration to ensure a positive cash flow at the end of each school year.

Performance:

The CRCS Budget for 2014-2015 will end with a cash reserve of \$110,000.

CRCS is currently receiving funds from a federal grant that will end in September 2016. They are planning to continue to apply for grants and will also be working on fundraising.

In addition to adding teacher positions, teacher pay will increase 10% for next year to make pay more comparable to the surrounding communities.

In response to family feedback \$70,000 was moved within the budget from Technology to Agricultural Education. Those funds were used to purchase a tractor and greenhouse.

Section 10: Facilities & Maintenance, Food Service, and Transportation

CRCS met its targets in the area of Facilities & Maintenance, Food Service, and Transportation.

Targets:

Adequacy of Facilities Maintenance in Support of Program

- Facility meets State standards

Food Service & Transportation

- Record of costs and student utilization for Food Service
- Record of costs and student utilization for Transportation

Performance:

Facilities & Maintenance: Every room and space at CRCS is being used. Space will be reorganized to allow for speech, OT and counseling. The school is kept clean and logs are kept for review.

Food Service:

Beginning January 5, 2015, CRCS contracted its lunch services with the Good Will-Hinckley Nutrition Program. This program has been well-received and parents report being happy that lunch is available at school.

- Approximately 10% of students eat breakfast provided at CRCS on a daily basis.

- Approximately 70% of students eat lunch provided at CRCS on a daily basis.

Transportation:

During the 2014-15 school year CRCS continued to contract with Don Poland for transportation. There were 2 bus routes available. 95% of eligible students used the transportation (morning and afternoon). One route was slightly altered to pick up additional students and several new pick-up/drop-off sites were added to accommodate families.

Looking forward to the 2015-16 school year CRCS is exploring a third bus and extending routes toward Canaan and Madison, with one bus picking up in Skowhegan resulting in shorter ride times.

Section 11: Evidence of Mission and Vision Implementation

Mission
To create a safe, respectful, nurturing and active learning community where every child is given the opportunity to thrive academically, to be accepted, to celebrate accomplishments and to develop a lifetime love of learning.

Evidence of CRCS's Mission is evident in the use and promotion of Responsive Classroom, Positive Behavioral Intervention Supports, and Mass Customized Learning.

Vision
To create a school where learning is built around each student so that they become engaged learners with relevant and challenging work.

Evidence of CRCS's Vision is evident in its hands-on Agricultural Education Program and Mass Customized Learning. The technology provided to each student actively engages them in their education.

Section 12: Commendations and Recommendations

Commendations

- All stakeholders know and can articulate the Mission and Vision of CRCS.
- The attitude at CRCS is positive among all groups.
- CRCS has done an impressive amount of curriculum work
- CRCS has used its grant money in a prudent manner.
- CRCS's Administrative leadership is very strong.
- The CRCS Governing Board dealt with a difficult issue in a thoughtful way resulting in a more mature board.
- CRCS's teachers have worked to determine how to adjust the school's schedule for them to most effectively work with students.

- CRCS's students know and understand the expectations.
- CRCS's students enjoy the hands-on curriculum and using the school's technology.

Recommendations

- Consider using a marketing expert to provide guidance regarding effective communication.
- Seek new Board members that are representative of all segments of the community and have the skills needed for an effective Board.
- Develop a new method of appointing Board members through a by-law change.
- Think beyond the grant cycle for fundraising.
- Be more proactive in communicating with parents, particularly in the area of technology.
- Continue to develop the use of the Marzone teacher evaluation process.
- Use well-developed surveys to determine student, family, and teacher satisfaction.
- As stated in the Monitoring Plan, the school shall develop an improvement plan to address academic weaknesses, particularly in the area of mathematics, by further analyzing state and local assessment data, and other means of assessment that have been used by the school.